/66 cont./

245 prevent the seedlings from withering. According to the Miao the tea plant is very sturdy and can resist the cold. It blooms in the ninth and tenth months, the flowers being white in color, and fading in the eleventh month. After the second and third [262] months, "blisters /p'ao/" form, which can be picked and eaten. [443] They taste sweet and sour, and are often sold by the Miao [439] women at the market place. During the seventh and eighth months the fruits ripen, and after being picked they are dried in the sun for three or four days. They split open themselves, disgorging two or four seeds. The seeds also must be dried in [258] the sun in order tomake them dry and crisp, so that they will not get wormy and to insure a lot of oil when expressed.

258 Tung and tea seeds both yield oil. The Miao sell these [439] seeds to the Chinese oil stores, few Miao people expressing the oil themselves. The few who do express tea oil still use a local [415] method. The sun-dried tea seeds are pounded into bits in a mortar. Then they are dry-fried in a pan. Then water is added and brought to a boil. As bubbles of oil float on the surface of the boiling water, they are scooped out with an iron ladle and [415] placed in a bowl. The bubbles of oil are heated again to make the water evaporate, and the residue is tea oil. The residual paste of the tung or tea seeds after the oil has been expressed [241] is called tung paste or tea paste respectively. The tung paste [388] can be used as fertilizer. The tea paste can be used as soap [226] for laundry and also can be ground into powder to be thrown into the river to cause fish to suffocate so that they can be caught easily.

314 Wild indigo plants grow abundantly everywhere in the Miao [249] area. Although the Miao know how to cultivate indigo plants, they also gather wild indigo for dyeing. Wild indigo plants are one to two kung ch'ih in height. A big one has a stalk as thick as a man's thumb, a lone plant without any side branches, reaching toward the sky. The leaves are small and oval in shape, and contain a great deal of indigo. Every year in the eighth and ninth months when the weather is still warm and before the frost comes, the indigo leaves are at their most luxuriant. The Miao go out in numbers to pick wild indigo leaves.

766 cont./

000 386 leaves. After the picking, they cut the leaves into small pieces of about 40 kung fen, tie them in arm-thick bundles, and place them in a large earthenware jar filled with pure spring water, where they are completely submerged. After three days the jar of clear water becomes dark green in color. The indigo bundles are then removed, and lime water is added to the jar. The ratio is a bowl of lime water to a tan /picul/ of indigo water. The lime is first dissolved in water: the solution is kept and the residue discarded. After being mixed with the lime water the indigo water /67/ is stirred with a stick to blend it. The precipitation is indigo.

249 [314] [291] Although wild indigo grows everywhere, its output in the end is not large. Furthermore, the Miao, men and women, all wear blue cotton clothes. The supply of wild indigo naturally is not enough to meet the demand and domestic indigo has to be cultivated (Illus. 36). It is planted in the second and third months and harvested in the ninth and tenth months before the frost. The output of domestic indigo is larger than that of wild indigo. The Miao usually dig a hole about two kung ch'ih [386] deep for making indigo. The process is the same as that for wild indigo.

The Miao also plant sugar cane in the low-lying places in deep valleys. The land for this crop must have fine soil and dry. On the periphery as well as in the center of the field several ditches are dug for draining water in case of rain. To plant sugar cane, they cut the cane into short lengths of about three or four nodes, planting three or four of them together. When they grow up they become a cluster. The clusters are about half a kung ch'ih apart. At planting time the sections are put into the earth, with the top ends slightly slanting, which are also covered with earth. After half a month, when the sprouts come out, light fertilizer is added. When they grow to a height of half a kung ch'ih, fertilizer is again put on. In all they are fertilized four or five times, and each time the earth is weeded and the soil loosened. Four or five days after the first frost in the ninth or tenth month the crop may be

[14 cont.]

241 mountain terrain with poor soil, in which they can grow only corn, buckwheat and mixed grains. They also rear cattle, [231] horses, pigs, and principally sheep. At Wei-ning and Ta-ting, where the territory is highly mountainous, the climate is cold, and the population is thin; it is unfit for raising crops but best fit for grazing. In the southeast the Miao-I areas are comparatively better and suitable for rice cultivation. Besides [283] agriculture they are also engaged in simple handicraft industries, [286] such as home spinning and weaving. The commercial centers 443 of the Miao-I in all areas are the village fairs held during the day for the bartering of goods. The fairs are located like a network in some convenient spots in the cities, on a vacant lot, or on the slope of a hill. They are named after certain cyclic animals such as chicken, dog, cow and so on. At the time of the fair men and women who come from all places number from several hundred to several thousand. At the fair everyday articles of household use are displayed in rows of adjoining straw sheds. A fair is a scene of activity and gaiety. The villages in 778 which the Miao-I live are often endowed with rich resources, but ●314 their belief in the earth as the dwelling place of the dragon spirit 316 forbids them to exploit its wealth, such as felling the trees for 784 timber and digging the mines for minerals. Hence their occupations are limited and their culture is backward.

6. Conclusion

000 Having learned from the foregoing the actual conditions of the Miao-I societies in Kweichow, we can realize their precarious situation. Today, enemy hoofs have ravaged half of the country, while the Miao-I areas have risen in importance with the din of guns in our war of resistance. We cannot afford any longer to allow the Miao-I people, who are owners of their lands, to muddle through life in their primitive way of living. It is hoped that the government administration and leaders of the society will begin to pay attention to the Miao-I communities,

/354 cont./

178 Lajonquière (2), too, has devoted attention to the culti-
243

2. II, p. 309.

vation of this field product among the Meau: "Wherever the Meau were able to adopt wet-rice fields, they have preferred to devote themselves to this work."

241 When the Meau in Thailand has found a suitable site in the forest for laying out fields, he goes there at the beginning [596] of the dry season with the members of his large /extended/ [782] family, sacrifices spirit-money, and requests first the ancestors and then the high Father-Mother spirit to help him and to protect him and his family against falling trees. Then all possible [787] omens are carefully noted. If no bad omens are discovered and none appear during the clearing that is now begun, the work is diligently continued. First the brush and the small trees, later the larger ones, are cut. Giant trunks, however, which offer /355/ too much resistance to the axes of the natives, are only hacked circularly, and the brush is piled up high around them. If resinous pine is encountered during this work, it is [314] left standing, but tapped so that the resin flowing out, which is a desirable product, will collect in the hollows of the tree. About a month later, when the cut underbrush and wood are thoroughly dry, the field is burned off and cleared of the half-burned wood; the latter is now piled around the trunks of the still unconquered primeval-forest giants, and everything is set afire again. Thus, even the mightiest trunks are finally [243] destroyed and only slightly hinder the growing seed of the mountain rice in its development under their crowns now stripped of foliage.

243 During the time between the burning and the first rains, which are awaited for the cultivation so that the forest soil will be sufficiently softened to receive the seed, the Meau [343] erect a small workhouse which is never lacking (Ill. 104).[1] [417] On the other hand, no fence is built around the field, unless it borders on the field of another. In that case a fence of [423] crude wooden sticks is erected on the boundary line. After

[1] [see cat 116, p 705. ANALYST]

/425 cont./

439 These observations are especially interesting because I
[114] found exactly the opposite among the Meau in northern
Thailand: they produce their guns themselves, but have no
[326] knowledge of pottery!
[323] The author continues his observations with a desctiption
[184] of the trade: "Trade is restricted to a locality and limited to bartering for a few things that are not part of their subsistence, namely, to certain luxury items, such as ornaments, colored silk, and ribbons. We have already mentioned that they are now beginning to buy even fabrics of European origin. In the region of Lao-Chay, a sector of Than-Thuy, they carry on a
[314] special trade in wood for the making of coffins. These are fossilized woods (usually the tree of life, note by Dr. B.) which were buried by earthquakes and which petrified, a property that makes them sought by the Chinese, who like to bury their dead in such wood. The /426/ Meau of this region dig up these
[314] woods, cut them into thick planks, and drag these heavy loads through forests and gorges in order to sell them on the 'T'ou-se-meo' of Mung-Tung."

At another place (1), Lajonquière comes back to the

1. II, p. 309.

silk of foreign origin previously mentioned by him: "All
[596] clothing is made exclusively within the family. They procure
[294] from the outside only the colored silk for the embroideries and the colorful bands which fops are beginning to add to their attire...
[286] The custom of buying cotton goods on the market or among the natives who produce it is spreading more and more, for the weaving of hemp is difficult and laborious." We find this observation, too, confirmed by Abadie (2).

2. Page 161.